

# What do You 'Need' to be Successful? (Published in SBN Philadelphia August 2000) By Phyllis Sisenwine



**Needs are like food and water – basic conditions that must be met for us to be happy and successful.**

Have you ever stopped to think about what your needs are? Most of us never really think about it, but everyone has needs. Needs are as basic as food and water. If the need is not being met and we are hungry or thirsty we get irritable. We also have emotional needs that must be met in order for us to be successful. When your needs are not being met, you will probably feel resentful, unappreciated or angry. And unmet needs hold you back from success! For example, if you need to be appreciated, but are not getting the thanks you require, you will feel resentful and it will affect your work. By realizing you need appreciation, you can develop a system to get that need met.

## **Identify your needs**

The first step to getting your needs met is to identify them. Look at the following list of needs and see which ones jump out at you. To be accepted, included, respected, appreciated, complimented, understood, heard, informed, acknowledged, flattered, esteemed or to be in control.

If you are having trouble identifying your personal needs from the previous list, here is another way to approach it. Think about the times when you have been less than your best. Perhaps you did a favor for someone and they didn't thank you or show appreciation and it really bugged you. What is your unmet need? To be appreciated. If you can identify your top four needs you can set up a system to meet them.

## **Design a system to get your needs met**

Once you have identified your needs, you will want to design a way to get them met. Your business coach, friend or spouse will help you with this system, which involves setting boundaries, raising your standards and asking for help.

Ask three to five people who care about you to help you get your needs met. I had a need to be appreciated. If I went out of my way for someone and they didn't show any appreciation it really bothered me. If I did a favor for a family member and they said "thanks" I found I wanted more than that or I felt unappreciated. Being appreciated was my key need. I asked five people who care about me if they would be willing to help me to get my needs met. They were happy to support me. I asked for a note, voicemail or email message telling me that they appreciate me. I asked if they were willing to do this once a week for 4 to 6 weeks. The cards and messages came in and it was great. I'm not saying the need is completely gone but it doesn't drive me like it used to.

If you have a manager who calls a meeting, but is always starting late he might have the need to control. To get his need met he keeps everyone waiting and starts the meeting late. He then runs late and inconveniences everyone. If he could recognize that he has the need to control he could also set up a way to get it met. (and if he doesn't you can put this magazine in his mail

slot) One who needs control often has difficulty delegating. It could be helpful if they start by setting up a system of delegating with guidelines for frequent feedback.

A salesperson that needs to win might antagonize the other salespeople by being very competitive. The manager, however, might see him as not being a team player. If that salesperson could get his need to win met by playing in a tennis league or playing poker regularly it would serve him better. For his manager, team building exercises would be helpful. Perhaps that salesman could be the team leader in a new sales effort.

The important thing is not to expect others to know what you need. Whether at work or at home, when it's appropriate, verbalize what you want. A spouse or coworker might not realize how much you need to be acknowledged, respected, etc. Be specific. Also, don't feel that if you have to ask for it, it doesn't count. That's not true. Asking to have your needs met does not make it less effective. Don't hesitate to ask for what makes you happy.

Remember, needs are like food and water. They are basic conditions that must be met for us to be happy and successful.